Igor Stravinsky Apollon musagète & Pulcinella Suite

Chamber Orchestra of Europe

Alexander Janiczek director

Education and Culture DG

The Chamber Orchestra of Europe is supported by the European Union Culture Programme.

Igor Stravinsky (1882~1971)

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Recorded at Église Maronite Notre-Dame Du Liban,
Paris, France from 19th~21st November 2008
Produced and engineered by Philip Hobbs
Post-production by Julia Thomas, Finesplice, UK

Cover painting:
The Ballet (oil on plywood) by Grace Cossington Smith, (1892~1984)
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Apollon musagète

① Naissance d'Apollon 5.07
② Variation d'Apollon 2.51
③ Pas d'action 4.45
④ Variation de Calliope 1.23
⑤ Variation de Polymnie 1.25
⑥ Variation de Terpsichore 1.33
⑦ Variation d'Apollon 2.25
⑧ Pas de deux 4.05
⑨ Coda (Apollon et les Muses) 3.34
⑩ Apothéose 3.49

Pulcinella Suite

⑪ I Sinfonia 1.59
⑫ II Serenata 3.06
⑬ III a: Scherzino 1.52
⑭ III b: Allegro 1.02
⑮ III c: Andantino 1.28
⑯ IV Tarantella 1.56
⑰ V Toccata 0.58
⑱ VI Gavotta 4.01
⑲ VII Vivo 1.38
⑳ VIII a: Menuetto 2.40
㉑ VIII b: Finale 2.09

TOTAL RUNNING TIME **54.00**

Stravinsky and the Past:
Pulcinella and Apollon musagète

Though born in Russia, Igor Stravinsky spent most of his long life in exile. From 1914 he lived first in Switzerland, then in France, then in America. He was not to return to his homeland for almost half a century, and then only for a brief visit in 1962. The novelist and essayist Milan Kundera, himself a long-time émigré from the communist régime in his native Czechoslovakia, understood all too well the consequences of this separation from the land of birth:

> *Without a doubt, Stravinsky … bore with him the wound of his emigration … [H]is only home was music, all of music by all musicians, the very history of music … He did all he could to feel at home there: he lingered in each room of that mansion, touched every corner, stroked every piece of the furniture; he went from the music of ancient folklore to Pergolesi, who gave him* Pulcinella *…, to the other Baroque masters, without whom his* Apollon musagète *… would be unimaginable.*
>
> (*Testaments Betrayed*, trans. L. Asher)

While Stravinsky swiftly became a cosmopolitan composer, speaking the international language of modern 'Western' music, the sting of his estrangement never left him. His roots remained planted in Russian soil.

The initial idea for ***Pulcinella*** was suggested to Stravinsky by Sergey Diaghilev, impresario of the famous Ballets Russes company, and the man responsible for bringing Stravinsky his first international success via his commission of the music for *The Firebird*. All Diaghilev wanted on this occasion was arrangements of some music by – as he thought at the time – the 18th-century Italian composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi. The choreographer Léonide Massine had devised the

story and Pablo Picasso had been engaged to design the production; Manuel de Falla had already declined the invitation to compose the music. At first, it seems, Stravinsky was decidedly nonplussed at the suggestion. But Diaghilev persuaded him at least to consult transcriptions of the music made both in Naples and at the British Museum. Stravinsky was instantly smitten: *'I looked, and I fell in love'*, he recalled.

Pulcinella was premiered on 15th May 1920 by the Ballets Russes at the Opéra in Paris, where it was billed simply as *'music by Pergolesi, arranged and orchestrated by Igor Stravinsky'*. Yet the work subsequently came to be identified more directly with Stravinsky as composer rather than arranger, in part a consequence of the concert suites he made of the score, including the version from 1922 (revised 1949) heard on this recording. While Stravinsky later asserted that the *'remarkable thing about* Pulcinella *is not how much but how little has been added or changed'*, the alterations are significant enough to turn the music instantly into something unmistakably of the 20th century. Stravinsky began by working directly onto the transcriptions Diaghilev had given him, subtly annotating the melodies and bass lines of arias by Pergolesi, trio sonata movements by Gallo, and even a tarantella by Wassenaer. Sometimes the result was just a representation of the original in Stravinsky's own accent. No-one could mistake the trombone and double-bass melody of the *'Vivo'* for anything other than Stravinsky, even though every note of Pergolesi's music is still present. There are cunning harmonic touches, anachronistic pedal points and off-beat accents that reveal the thumbprint of the arranger, but it remains a loving, albeit humorous, homage to Pergolesi. The same is true of the opening *'Sinfonia'* (original music by Gallo). Elsewhere, however, Stravinsky declares his hand more decisively. In the *'Serenata'*, for instance, he adds an unchanging drone (an open fifth), which denies the music its forward movement and whose resulting dissonances bestow a languid, melancholic air. The *'Finale'* is radically recomposed, repeating

bars and moving them around, adding new harmonies and shifting downbeats, resulting in a rhythmically energised music that is categorically Stravinskian and, one might say, almost as Russian as it is Italian.

Pulcinella was Stravinsky's discovery of the past, *'the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible. It was a backward look, of course – the first of many love affairs in that direction – but it was a look in the mirror, too'*. Despite its obvious dependence on the music of the past, *Pulcinella* represented an important turning point in Stravinsky's artistic development. Just as, after the First World War, Picasso had felt the need to seek a rapprochement with the traditional forms of art he had once rejected so that he could move forward, equally *Pulcinella* revealed to Stravinsky the possibilities of engagement with all kinds of earlier music in order to renew his own musical language. Crucial, though, was not the material he took (it could come from anywhere – he described himself as suffering from a rare form of kleptomania!) but his attitude to it. Everything he touched he made his own.

If *Pulcinella* was the epiphany, then ***Apollon musagète*** must surely be the apogee of what became known as Stravinsky's 'neoclassicism'. Commissioned by the American patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, Stravinsky chose, as he explains in his autobiography, *'to compose a ballet founded on moments or episodes in Greek mythology plastically interpreted by dancing of the so-called classical school'*. He wanted to create what he termed a *'ballet blanc'*, a score of great purity and unity, in which violent contrasts were avoided and all elements were pared down to their simplest. Hence it is scored for strings alone and makes almost exclusive use of diatonic harmony (the equivalent of the 'white notes' on the piano keyboard). For Georges Balanchine, choreographer of the 1928 European premiere, the work was a revelation: *'In its discipline and restraint, in its sustained oneness of tone and feeling … [*Apollon*] seemed to tell me that I*

could dare not to use everything, that I, too, could eliminate'. The result was the perfect union of music and dance in the expression of pure, classical beauty.

And how did Stravinsky achieve this sense of order as symbolised by the Greek god Apollo? One means was to look to poetry. Each dance explores a basic iambic (short–long) pattern; the *'Variation of Calliope'* (the muse of poetry) is headed by two lines from Boileau and takes the twelve-syllable lines of the alexandrine as its rhythmic model. Another means was to allude to the stateliness of French Baroque dances, such as the ouverture style of the opening *'Birth of Apollo'* or the pavane-like second *'Variation of Apollo'*. The closing *'Apotheosis'*, in which Apollo leads the three Muses towards Parnassus, brings together the various rhythmic elements of the work in music that is not just serenely beautiful but also seems to speak of something deeper and darker, something beyond reason and order. Stravinsky looks back to ancient Greece, but is ultimately only able to see the reflection of his own tragic age. Even when at his most classical, we hear, once again, the voice of Stravinsky the exile.

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Chamber Orchestra of Europe

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The Chamber Orchestra of Europe is supported by the European Union Culture Programme.

Acknowledged as one of the finest orchestras in the world, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe (COE) was founded in 1981 by a group of young musicians graduating from the European Union Youth Orchestra. It was their ambition to continue working together at the highest possible professional level, and of that original group, 18 remain in the current core membership of 50. It is the players' wealth of cultural backgrounds and shared love of music-making which remain at the heart of their inspired performances. Representing fifteen nationalities living in twelve European countries, the COE mainly performs in continental Europe, regularly visits the USA and occasionally tours in the Far East. From the beginning, the Orchestra has appeared with the world's leading conductors and soloists. As well as being Leaders and Principals of other major orchestras, the players themselves also pursue parallel careers as international soloists, members of celebrated chamber groups, and as tutors and professors of music. The COE's philosophy also influences the players' own work during the rest of the year, notably in a wide range of educational projects in which they are involved.

Important partnerships with some of the most prominent concert halls in Europe such as the Royal Festival Hall in London, the Cité de la Musique in Paris, the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam have all contributed to a full diary for the foreseeable future. The COE is honoured to have a close association with the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, to appear regularly at the festivals in Lucerne and at Styriarte in Graz, and to have strong links with the concert halls in Baden-Baden, Bonn, Budapest, Brussels, Cologne, Luxembourg, Toulouse, Vienna and many more.

Renowned not only for its remarkable live performances but also for the quality of its recordings, the COE has won many international prizes for its wide repertoire. It is proud of its three Gramophone "Record of the Year" awards, a 2004 Grammy Award, and the MIDEM 2008 "Classical Download" Award.

In 2007, the COE was appointed one of the European Union's "Cultural Ambassadors", and as a result now benefits from invaluable EU support. Over recent years the Orchestra has also received significant financial support from The Gatsby Charitable Foundation.

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violins
Alexander Janiczek
Fiona Brett
Christian Eisenberger
Ingrid Friedrich
Lucy Gould
Matilda Kaul
Sywia Konopka
Fiona McNaught
Stefano Mollo
Fredrik Paulsson
Joe Rappaport
Bettina Sartorius
Aki Sauliere
Lisa Schatzman
Henriette Scheytt
Martin Walch

violas
Pascal Siffert
Aurélie Entringer
Göran Fröst
James Hogg
Dorle Sommer

cellos
William Conway
Kate Gould
Howard Penny
Luis Zorita

double basses
Enno Senft
Denton Roberts
Lutz Schumacher

flutes
Jaime Martin
Josine Buter

oboes
François Leleux
Ruth Contractor

bassoons
Matthew Wilkie
Christopher Gunia

horns
Martin Owen
Elizabeth Randell

trumpets
Nicholas Thompson

trombone
Håkan Björkman

Alexander Janiczek

director

Alexander Janiczek, highly sought after as a director, soloist, guest leader and chamber musician, was born in Salzburg to a musical family of Polish and Czech descent. He studied with Helmuth Zehetmair at the Mozarteum and also in masterclasses with Max Rostal, Nathan Milstein, Ruggiero Ricci and Dorothy Delay.

Alexander established his name as a concert violinist at the age of nine when he won first prize in the National Competition of Austria. From the age of twenty he developed a close association with Sándor Végh and the Camerata Salzburg. This led to tours across Europe and the Americas as leader, director and soloist and in recordings including Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante and Mozart's G Major Concerto – played on Sándor Végh's famous Paganini Stradivarius.

He is a regular guest director with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, with whom he has toured extensively for many years throughout Europe and the Far East. In 2008 he directed the Orchestra in a European tour with Mitsuko Uchida in a programme of Mozart and Stravinsky. A previous programme of Mozart, Strauss and Wagner with Uchida was toured across Europe in 2007. Of his direction of Strauss' Metamorphosen it was said, *'we witnessed the phenomenon of twenty-three musicians linked as telepathically as a quartet'* (Intermezzo) *'which seemed to emerge through internal combustion'* (The Times).

Alexander Janiczek also has a close relationship with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, whom he led from 1999-2002 and continues to be invited back to as director and soloist on tours throughout Scotland and Europe. He has directed the Orchestra in the highly acclaimed series of Mozart recordings for Linn Records (Linn BKD 273, 287 and 320).

Alexander also directs orchestras such as the Orchestra I Pomeriggi Musicali of Milan, the Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and has recently committed himself to exploring 19th-century performance practice with La Chambre Philharmonique under Emmanuel Krivine and the Orchestre des Champs-Elysées under Philippe Herreweghe. He has appeared as guest leader for special projects with orchestras such as: Budapest Festival, City of Birmingham Symphony, London Philharmonic, London Symphony and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestras and the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, SWR Radio Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart and Bavarian State Opera, Munich.

Alexander has an extensive repertoire ranging from Bartók and Berg to Mendelssohn and Mozart and has appeared with artists such as Yuri Bashmet, Jiří Bělohlávek, Olari Elts, Thierry Fischer, Hans Graf, Philippe Herreweghe, Manfred Honeck, Neeme Järvi, Ton Koopman, Oliver Knussen, Emmanuel Krivine, Antonello Manacorda, Sir Roger Norrington, Murray Perahia, Matthias Pintscher and Joseph Swensen.

As a dedicated chamber musician, he was invited by Mitsuko Uchida and Richard Goode to the Marlboro Music Festival and has appeared with artists such as Thomas Adès, Stefan Arnold, Joshua Bell, Till Fellner, Steven Isserlis, Boris Pergamenschikow, Denes Varjon, Llŷr Williams and Christian Zacharias. His chamber music with Llŷr Williams currently includes the complete Beethoven Sonatas. He also features on the Hebrides Ensemble's acclaimed CD for Linn Records, 'Olivier Messiaen: Chamber Works' (Linn BKD 314), launched at London's Wigmore Hall.

Alexander Janiczek plays the 'Baron Oppenheim' Stradivarius from 1716, which is on loan to him from the National Bank of Austria.

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Alexander Janiczek director / violin

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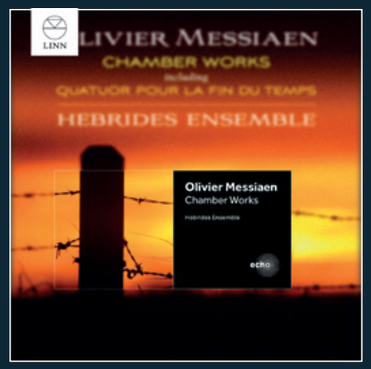

Hebrides Ensemble
Messiaen: Chamber Works

Alexander Janiczek, Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Mozart: Serenades

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